



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

144  
5P9  
98

LC144.P5 P9 1898  
Compulsory education.  
Gutman Library

APD1158



3 2044 028 956 977

**HARVARD UNIVERSITY**



**LIBRARY OF THE  
GRADUATE SCHOOL  
OF EDUCATION**

211  
COMPULSORY EDUCATION.

---

PREPARED FOR THE

Public Education Association

OF PHILADELPHIA,

AND THE

Department of Education of the Civic Club

OF PHILADELPHIA.

---

1898.

LC 144  
.P5 P9  
1898



## PUBLIC EDUCATION ASSOCIATION.

### Executive Committee.

MR. PHILIP C. GARRETT,	MISS CHARLOTTE PENDLETON,
MR. ELLIS D. WILLIAMS,	MISS SUSAN W. JANNEY,
MR. JAMES H. PENNIMAN,	MRS. MATTHEW BAIRD,
MR. ISAAC H. CLOTHIER,	MISS M. CAREY THOMAS,
MR. L. W. MILLER,	MISS DORA KEEN,
MR. CLINTON ROGERS WOODRUFF,	MR. EDWARD G. MCCOLLIN.

## CIVIC CLUB.

### Board of Directors.

MRS. CORNELIUS STEVENSON,	MISS MARY CHANNING WISTER,
MISS CORNELIA FROTHINGHAM,	MRS. THOMAS S. KIRKBRIDE,
MRS. EDWARD LONGSTRETH,	MISS HALLOWELL,
MRS. MATTHEW BAIRD,	MRS. GEORGE W. KENDRICK, JR.,
MISS EDITH WETHERILL,	MRS. F. VON A. CABEEN,
MRS. WM. CHANNING RUSSEL,	MRS. WILLIAM F. JENKS,
MISS FRANCES CLARK,	MRS. C. STUART PATTERSON,
MRS. J. P. LUNDY.	

PHILADELPHIA, January 8, 1898.

This report has been prepared by committees of the two Associations, and is published by them as their joint report.

PHILIP C. GARRETT,  
*President Public Education Association.*

ANNA HALLOWELL,  
*Chairman Department of Education of Civic Club.*

---

## COMPULSORY EDUCATION COMMITTEES.

---

### **Public Education Association.**

MISS DORA KEEN, *Chairman*,  
HON. GEORGE W. HALL,  
PROF. MORRIS JASTROW, JR.,  
MR. CLARENCE M. CLARK, JR.

### **Department of Education of Civic Club.**

MISS DORA KEEN, *Chairman*,  
MISS MARY S. GARRETT,  
MISS JANE HUBBARD,  
MRS. GEORGE S. LOVELL,  
MISS EDITH CHILD,  
MISS ETHEL PARRISH,  
MISS MARIAN T. MCINTOSH,  
MISS LUCY BAIRD.

Presented before the respective Associations on November 20 and 22, 1897, and revised to January 15, 1898.

For Compulsory Attendance Act, see *Appendix*.

## REPORT ON COMPULSORY EDUCATION.

Compulsory education is not a new thing. It finds many advocates and many opponents. Undoubtedly, it is not the highest ideal in education. It is but a means to the end desired. With reason, its opponents urge that "the family is the unit of our social fabric; the control of the child is a right inherent in the parent." Yet so long as we have ignorant or selfish parents, we shall have to resort to compulsion: for by its aid only can the child's right to an education be enforced. In our zeal for parental authority, let us not forget the child.

Compulsory education has been found necessary in nearly every country of Europe, in several countries of South America, in Japan, and in thirty-one of the United States. The Pennsylvania law is the most recent, having been enacted May 16, 1895. It took effect at once in the State at large, but not in Philadelphia. This fact was due partly to its defective form. The original report of the Civic Club Committee (presented November 21, 1896, by Mrs. Talcott Williams) showed the objects of the Pennsylvania law and the difficulties in its enforcement. Attention was called to the fact that absentees become vagrants or criminals. Another report\* points out that in Chicago, according to one of its own school reports, "out of 12,000 children not attending school, in 1891-1892, more than three-fourths were notorious loafers and idlers, who could not be forced into the schools and who furnished recruits for reform schools and penitentiaries."

\* Chapin, Report on Compulsory Education and Truancy.



That the people of Philadelphia are beginning to appreciate the importance of education, is shown by the appearance of a delegation of the Junior Order of the United American Mechanics, at a recent meeting of sectional school directors to consider the abolition of half-time schooling in Philadelphia. The meeting of November 30th, of the Thirty-second Sectional Board, also took up the question of half-time, and was attended by delegations from the Mechanics, the Daughters of Liberty, the Woman's Health Protective Association, and by three councilmen. Even more emphatic is the definite stand taken by the labor movement as a whole. The trade-unions of England and America have put forth a platform containing ten propositions, and the first is compulsory education. Philadelphia's interests being essentially industrial, she can best protect her industries by having every child in school, to receive whatever education is most fitted to make him intelligent in his work.

Considering the difficulties in the way of enforcement, Mrs. Williams' report pointed out the three necessary conditions—a census, penalties, and a system of procedure. The provisions of the original law were defective in these respects. Chief among the difficulties was the failure of the assessors' lists to give the necessary information, and next, the failure of the law to fix who should pay for the census. The law was amended July 12, 1897, and, on the whole, in its present form compares favorably with similar laws in other States and countries. It is a workable law, since it provides for a system, authoritative administration, and penalties. It is loosely constructed in some respects, and fails altogether to provide for certain conditions, and for certain phases of the problem; that is, lack of detail, and lack of

exactness of thought and expression are evidenced. In any case, the law should be enforced; its defects and inadequacies will best be proved by object lesson. Some of the omissions are noted in Appendix B.

Before the passage of the amendments, preparations were made to put the Act in force in Philadelphia. At the beginning of the year 1897, the Board of Public Education appointed a Committee on Compulsory Education, charged with the general duties of providing for the execution of the State laws on the subject, and of recommending "such measures to the Board as may be deemed necessary in connection therewith." It is with the present prospects for a practical enforcement of the law that this report is chiefly concerned.

Taking up the work where Mrs. Williams' report left it, the plan of the committees was to make a general study of the subject, in order, by comparison with other systems, to find out new points that might be of use in carrying out the law, or in providing for future amendment. During the summer, data were collected by the Civic Club Committee. They examined systems in vogue abroad and in the United States; under the latter, viz., the provisions for New York, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Minnesota, Montana and the District of Columbia. Investigation was also made of the operation of the law, where in force, in Pennsylvania.

The foreign systems were interesting as literature of the subject; on account, however, of the wide difference of the conditions here and abroad, they were not very suggestive. Yet it is worth while to note the excellent results obtained by the German system, under which, in 1891, only 1 in 6,000 children of the required school age failed to attend school. Compare with these the results in Boston, as shown by the recent investigation of

the State Board of Education: the best showing, where there had been the most rigid enforcement of the law, was a proportion of 1 to 50; while in the State of Massachusetts at large it was 1 to a little less than 19. Poor as this showing is, it is slightly better than that of any of the other States.

The District of Columbia and Montana were investigated to determine, if possible, why their laws were dead letters. In the District of Columbia, lack of accommodation has been the difficulty, though the law has been a statute now some years (1864). For Montana, the reasons did not appear, the State Superintendent merely stating that public opinion was now demanding that the law be enforced. It was passed in 1883.

The reports from New York and Massachusetts proved the most suggestive. Massachusetts educators have been untiring in their efforts to work out a perfect system; and the experience of New York is pertinent, because the conditions are much the same as those in Pennsylvania, and because the New York law was passed but one year prior to that of Pennsylvania.

The Massachusetts law is the result of an evolution which has many lessons for us. The original law, passed in 1842, was practically a dead letter till 1875. In 1862, the distinction between truancy and absenteeism was emphasized—absentees being those non-attendant upon school for reasons other than wilful truancy. The same year, truant schools were established, with the term of detention fixed at one, later at two years (maximum). Attendance officers were also appointed by the school committees. In 1896, an important provision was made which authorized the State Board of Education to appoint some suitable agent to enforce the law, under control of the State Board. The Act of 1871 introduced penalties. The

Massachusetts system is practically one of local option, administered by towns. In Connecticut, the law is administered directly by the State, through four agents of the State Board of Education, and this has proved to be the better system. In 1878, Massachusetts provided that towns not complying with the compulsory law should forfeit their share of the school fund. The next year, accordingly, 214 towns reported the law "enforced." New York has a similar provision, withholding one-half of all public school moneys as penalty for neglect. Truant schools were the next difficulty in Massachusetts, being connected with reformatories, almshouses, and similar unsuitable institutions. The efforts of the State thus far had been in the direction of punishment. They were now directed towards reformation. County truant schools were proposed, and established in 1880. A year later, it was provided that two or more counties might join in union truant schools. Several have since then been established, and to these nearly all truants in Massachusetts are sent. A payment of \$2 a week is made by the town to the county, for each truant detained. Boston's Parental School was started in 1895, and works well. According to the present Massachusetts law, the time required for attendance is thirty weeks, about the same as that required in Pennsylvania. The age limits are 8 to 14. The penalty exacted of parents for five days' absence is \$20. An annual registration is required, and there is strict penalty for neglect. As in Prussia, attendance on private schools is considered to fulfil the requirements of the law, only when they have been approved by the school committees, and when progress be shown equal to that in the public schools. Each town must appoint two attendance officers, who have power to prosecute, when so directed by local

school committees. The compensation of these officers is fixed by the town, and varies in amount.

Finding all present provisions to be still inadequate, the Massachusetts State Board of Education has been laboring for two years to formulate a satisfactory law to replace the present Act, and one which shall effectually overcome non-attendance and truancy. It may be of interest to note some of the provisions that the Board thought necessary to incorporate in the new Act. Every town and city is required to maintain school at least eight months of the year; and the course of study must be sufficiently broad and thorough to fit pupils for entrance to State normal schools, technical schools, or colleges. The period of required attendance is increased to thirty-six weeks, and children from 7 to 17 are to attend the entire time. Every city of 20,000 must provide and maintain a course of instruction in manual training approved by the State Board of Education. All towns may, and those having a population of 10,000 *must* provide free instruction to children under 15 years of age, in industrial and mechanical drawing. From statistics gathered from fifty representative towns, the conclusion was reached that \$20 is too large a fine. A reduction is therefore proposed to \$5 for first offence, and \$20 (maximum) for subsequent offences. The experience of European countries has been similar. Some of their fines are excessively small. The reason given is, that a small fine is more easily collected and the penalty more likely to be enforced. Pennsylvania's fine is \$2 to \$5. According to Massachusetts' proposed law, if attendance upon private schools is to satisfy the law, such schools must maintain a course equal to that of the public schools and be satisfactory to the State Board; must be open to inspection by the Board, and must make

return of attendance. (In Minnesota, children not in public schools are subject to the same examinations as those that are.)

Under the law in question, the State maintenance and control of truant schools is advised, these to be known as "parental" schools, and to be under the direction of seven trustees. Two of these shall be women, and all shall be appointed by the Chief Executive. It is also recommended that these schools be subject to inspection and criticism by the State Board of Education and by the State Board of Lunacy and Charity. Commitment, if the child be under 13, shall be until 15; if over 13, for two years. Trustees of parental schools may board in approved homes any of the children whose welfare they judge will be promoted by so doing. They may also transfer incorrigibles to the reform school. The principle of the truant school is well set forth in the report on compulsory education and truancy of Mr. T. F. Chapin:—

"What," he asks, "is the function of the truant school? Evidently, we have truant officers that think it is to make paupers and criminals, and they frankly say as much. Now, if there be the least ground for such an opinion, it lies in a misapprehension and misuse by the community of a valuable agency. The boy who wilfully plays hookey is taken in custody early in his course of dereliction; but here lies the difficulty. It seems cruel to put court record upon a young child. So long as the truant school remains a quasi-penal institution,—an adjunct of the courts of justice instead of an ally of the public schools,—so long it may be expected to fail in fulfilling its mission. Its proper function in our educational system is a beneficent one. If it is to cure truancy, only truants should be sent to it, not reform school candidates.

A school justice who has no other judicial duties or connection with the law, who is in all his affiliations an educator, and who might with propriety be a teacher or assistant to the Superintendent or clerk of the Board of Education,—such a man might constitute a fitting court for hearing and disposing of truant cases. His legal lore need be neither deep nor far-reaching to administer the office intelligently and successfully."

Again, Brooklyn's Superintendent, Mr. Maxwell, tells us that:—

"Truant boys are committed to the parental school by the Superintendent, when the parents give consent; failing this, a boy may be committed by a police magistrate. During the current year, Brooklyn intends introducing some of the methods of the George Junior Republic, namely, payment for work done, and self-government. Unfortunately the law obliges us to discharge all boys on the 31st of July of each year. This, in my judgment, is a very bad feature. The system accomplishes its best results by an indeterminate sentence which permits the detention of boys until they show evidence of reform, or until they pass the limit of the compulsory school age. Each truant is allowed to inspect his own record, at stated intervals, to judge of his progress in working his way out."

Bearing out the ideas of Mr. Chapin and Mr. Maxwell as to the function and scope of the parental school, Mr. Skinner, State Superintendent for New York, urges the establishment of one or more State home schools for truants. Advising that they be located in the country, he says: "I cannot too strongly emphasize the conviction of leading educators of to-day, as to the necessity of keeping our truant schools free from all environment that makes them familiar with the criminal classes and with

vice, or that has a tendency to destroy their self-respect, or to impress the community with the idea that their detention is in the nature of a punishment for viciousness or criminality."

The report from New York is very full. It is given by counties, towns, and villages. Two facts are clearly demonstrated. The first is the need for city and State parental schools. The cost of such a school at Syracuse is found to average \$1 a day per pupil. The Brooklyn Board has appropriated \$15,000 for its Truant School. We hesitate at the expense, yet when these same children, through false economy, have been allowed to become vagrants and criminals,—when it is perhaps too late for reformation,—self-interest leads us without hesitation to confine such children as have become dangerous to the community, in reformatories and prisons. Ninety per cent. of the truants in the State of New York are without proper accommodation. The efficacy of the truant school is seen in England, where, it is stated, a single short detention in the truant school cures 80 per cent. of the cases. In Brooklyn, of 118 truants committed during the year ending July 31, 1896, only 18 had to be recommitted the following year, and of 30 habitual truants, but 1 had finally to be sent to a reform school.

Coming now to the second lesson that may be learned from the New York report, if the arguments for truant provision be conclusive, no less so are those for careful selection of attendance officers. The experience of Massachusetts in this respect is exactly the same. Partial enforcement is all that can be claimed for the law in any State; and, speaking generally, only where attendance officers have been appointed, and efficient ones, have good results been secured.



The New York law is practically the same as that of Pennsylvania. In New York, every child between 8 and 16, except in case of valid excuse, shall attend regularly from October 1st to June 1st: between 8 and 12 years, the whole term; between 12 and 14 years, 80 consecutive days of school attendance, commencing October 1st, and during the remainder of the period, when not regularly and lawfully employed; between 14 and 16 years, during the whole term, when not regularly and lawfully employed. Let us see the law in operation. In a case of irregular attendance, a printed postal, signed by the principal of the school, notifies the parent that his child does not attend school. An extract from the law is printed below, stating the obligation and the fine imposed for violation, and also a clear, condensed statement of the law. If this notice be disregarded, the parent is summoned to appear before the Board of Attendance Officers. On the reverse side of the summons is a detailed account of the case, made by the attendance officer, giving record of non-attendance, conduct, visits, excuses given by parent, and date of final notice. With this is a printed statement, to be signed by the parent, acknowledging the charge of non-attendance, with a promise to require his child's attendance for the rest of the current year, and a request that the case be dismissed. The child, now classed as a truant, must have his record signed daily by the parent for attendance and conduct. The record is also signed by the principal of the school, and, if unsatisfactory, a notice is placed on the back, from the Superintendent of the Truancy Department, that unless there be improvement, the parent must appear on a given date to sign papers for his child's commitment. Commitment to the parental school or reformatory is by a city magistrate, and is determined by the child's record and the police.

reports. There is at present in New York City one Truant School where truants are detained. The truant may be held one year in school. It is, however, soon ascertained whether or not he is a proper subject for a reformatory; and this explains how accommodations for only 50 may suffice for 500 during the course of the year. United States Commissioner of Education Harris estimates one commitment to a parental school for every 4,000 of population.\* London has three truant schools, with an average term of six weeks' confinement. The system of procedure in New York just quoted is that in case of truancy. No information was received as to the system in case of simple inquiry. The Boston system would seem superior in its substitution of immediate contact of parent with attendance officer, for the postal system of New York. The law applies equally to public, private, and parochial schools; and of the 6,000 to 7,000 truants, the proportion is estimated to be, 100 in private, 1,000 in parochial and 5,000 in public schools.

From Pennsylvania, it is too soon to expect many reports of the detailed working of the system, yet a few have been received. A statement from Doylestown, May 26, 1897, reports results in Bucks County. Among the difficulties complained of are the inaccuracies and illegibility of assessors' lists, lack of proper clothing, and the burden of duties laid upon school boards. At Harrisburg, on Nov. 13, 1897, twenty parents were warned by the Secretary of the School Board of the non-attendance of their children. In Media, Nov. 12, 1897, at a meeting of a Teachers' Institute, it was stated by a director that but one child was non-attendant, and his case was to receive attention the following day. At Easton, Jan. 14, 1898, the Board of School Controllers arrested and fined a

\* Rep. for '88-'89, Vol. I., p. 479.

number of parents for infraction of the Compulsory Attendance Law. Pittsburg is considering the establishment of a parental school. The reports of attendance officers, where found at all, are very meagre. The following comes from Allegheny:—

Report dated May, 1897. Reports by districts (5).

	Totals.
Absentees .....	1,036
Truants .....	163
Visits paid truants .....	261
Truants returned .....	156
Truants still troublesome .....	10
Non-attendants .....	14
Over and under age required by law .....	29
In other schools .....	6
In need of clothes .....	16
Necessarily at work .....	6
Unnecessarily at work .....	2
Physically disqualified .....	5
Uncontrollable .....	2

The value of detailed and accurate reports is incalculable. No substantial improvement can be made in the system itself without definite data; and for making the law of large use, full and reliable reports are of first importance. If Philadelphia be thorough in this work, though affecting education primarily, the results will at the same time add to the efficacy of all social science workers. Individually and collectively, the condition and the needs of the children of the city will be before us. We shall see to what extent there is need for vacation schools, as well as for special schools for children mentally, morally, or physically deficient.

While all the foregoing information is important and necessary to a proper comprehension of the conditions in

Philadelphia (and this must be our excuse for the space we have devoted to it), yet all thus far is but introductory to the consideration of the present status of the matter in this city. What that is, we shall now endeavor to point out.

The enrollment of children was made in May last, by the assessors of voters, but, like that of the previous year, proved utterly unreliable. The attendance officers have been furnished with the lists of children as given by the assessors, supplemented by lists from principals of public, parochial, and private schools. Now that the law is becoming more fully understood, the private schools are responding to the approaches made to them. The law provides that the *attendance officers may* make the census of children between the ages of 5 and 21, and they are to do so in February, 1898. There is at last a prospect of procuring definite knowledge of the conditions to be dealt with. In November, 1897, the Board of Public Education Committee on Compulsory Education placed the execution of the law under the direction of the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Edward Brooks, who selected Dr. Singer, one of his assistants, to aid him in the work. The city was divided into thirty districts, as nearly equal as possible, and assignments made to the attendance officers. These officers, thirty in number, were appointed Nov. 9th, by the Board of Education Committee, their appointment being confirmed by the Board. They are under the direction and control of the Superintendent, representing the committee. Five are women. The salary, alike for men and women, is not to exceed \$2 a day.

On November 15th, the Superintendent called a meeting of the attendance officers and gave them verbal instructions in respect to their duties. Copies of the law,

certificates of authority, printed instructions, and blanks for their work, were immediately prepared and placed in their hands. Weekly meetings of the officers were held, their work discussed, and further instructions given them. Weekly written reports are made by them to the Superintendent, and all cases requiring special consideration are presented to him for decision. The Superintendent and the Committee have been careful to explain to them the delicate nature of their duties, that persuasion and tact are to be used rather than force. In the absence of special schools, no attempt is made to force incorrigible or vicious children into school. November 22d, very complete and specific instructions were given to the attendance officers. They are diligently to seek out non-attendants and truants, and make earnest efforts to have such children sent to school. The blanks furnished them for reports of calls made at homes, specify name and age of child, name and residence of parent, final disposition of case, and any additional information that may seem important. Their weekly summarized reports state the number of visits made each day to schools, homes, and employers; number of non-attendants not previously reported, number of truants, and number of children found illegally employed, and in each case the number of those sent to school; also, number of children mentally or physically unable to attend school, and number kept at home for urgent reasons. Suspensions, withdrawals and transfers of pupils are to be reported weekly. An additional column might be added for children in school over and under the ages required by law. Already the moral effect of the law has been apparent. Directly and indirectly its enforcement has put many children in school. The work of the officers is intended to be thorough and fruitful of information. They are to make lists:—

(1). Of non-attendants between 8 and 16, indicating in each case legal employment, lack of clothing, truancy, help to parents, or other cause of irregularity.

(2). Lists of children under 13 employed, and lists of employers of such children in violation of the law. Also lists of those under 16 employed, who cannot read and write the English language and who have not certificates of attendance at school for sixteen weeks of the previous year, as required by law (after January 1, 1898).

(3). Lists of private schools and of educational institutions in the respective districts of the officers, with location of each school and name of principal. Also lists of children that are not attending school, but that are receiving instruction as required by the Act.

(4). Lists of charitable and kindred organizations willing to co-operate with the Department of Public Schools in carrying the Act into effect.

In December, 1897, a form of notification to parents was prepared, for cases of non-attendance, irregular attendance, or truancy. It is sent out or served upon the parent by the attendance officer. The complaint is stated and the request made that said child begin regular attendance the Monday following. The date is named and the particular school suggested. Below the notification is an abstract from the law, stating briefly the requirements and penalty for neglect.

The form of complaint served upon the employer of a child in violation of the laws, directs the employer's attention to the laws, and gives extracts from them. It is signed by the Superintendent, and by the attendance officer in the case.

A copy of the Act and a circular explaining its provisions were also sent out in December, 1897, to every principal. In the circular, the purposes of the Act are

pointed out and the co-operation of teachers with those in authority is solicited. They are requested to forward *weekly* to the Superintendent, on blanks furnished for the purpose, the names and ages of all truants, irregular attendants, and pupils suspended, transferred, or withdrawn, with the parent's name and residence, cause of action, and any other needed information, and to keep duplicates of these reports for the inspection of the attendance officers. Dates are to be specified, and in case of transfer, name of school and section to which the pupil has been transferred. Attention is called to the importance of care and accuracy, since, in case of judicial proceedings for violation of the Act, the teachers' reports must constitute the main documentary evidence. "Irregularity" in attendance is construed to mean, for the present, absence from school without lawful excuse for three school sessions in one week. "Lawful excuse" is construed to mean such excuse, given in writing by the parent or duly authorized responsible person, as, in the judgment of the principal, shall be a satisfactory reason, as well as an excuse, for absence or irregular attendance. A full list of the thirty attendance officers, with their addresses and districts, is included in the circular. *Monthly* reports enter the names and ages of pupils that have been absent five days without lawful excuse, together with name and residence of parent, and remarks. In cases of transfer, a certificate of admission is signed by the new principal and forwarded to the attendance officer of the district.

The Superintendent reports progress weekly to the Board of Education Committee. The reports of the Attendance Officers thus far, viz., from November 22, 1897, to January 15, 1898, show:—

Visits made to schools (public).....	2,150
Visits made to homes.....	12,887

Non-attendants .....	3,158
Non-attendants sent to school.....	1,566
Visits made to employers.....	251
Illegally employed .....	1,303
Illegally employed sent to school.....	49
Truants .....	797
Truants returned to school.....	554
Incorrigible truants .....	130
Mentally or physically disqualified.....	664
Kept at home for urgent reasons (temporary causes) .....	1,752

The first question asked by every one, on looking into the subject of compulsory education in Philadelphia, is, "where can we place the children brought in by the law?" It is quite true that the chief difficulty is the actual or apparent lack of accommodation. Recognizing the situation, there seems to be a general movement on the part of all those interested in education to devise a plan by which provision may be made for the children on half-time and those out of school. Not waiting for the authoritative statistics that are soon to be before the public, the recently organized Association of Presidents and Secretaries of Sectional School Boards, in September, took practical hold of the half-time question. They appointed a general committee, consisting of a delegate from each Sectional Board; such committee to act in conjunction with the Committee on Primary, Secondary and Grammar Schools of the Board of Public Education and with the Superintendent. Before making definite projects for eliminating the evils in question, care was taken to determine facts. On Nov. 15, 1897, a report presented by a special committee on statistics stated, that after a careful consideration of the subject, the committee was satisfied that a better apportionment of pupils would



give ample accommodations for all, on full time, but that this object could be accomplished only by concerted action. Twenty-one out of the thirty-eight Sectional Boards have decided to lend their support. The statistics correspond with data in the office of the Superintendent. They cover all necessary points except that of the number of children out of school. That information, it will be apparent, could be arrived at only by a complete census, such as that of the assessors or attendance officers. The number of children out of school, be it observed, is the fact of greatest importance, the fundamental item that the defective form of the unamended law made it impossible to obtain. The number is variously estimated from 10,000 to 30,000. While awaiting definite knowledge of this link of the chain, the statistics presented, which we are about to quote, were also needed before any definite scheme could be formed: Total number of pupils enrolled in 1st to 12th grades, 130,671. Of these, the number within the age limits required by law is not stated. Number on half-time, 8,176, in 156 classes. (Since November, 1897, however, more than 900 of these half-time pupils have been placed on full time.) Vacant rooms, 144, of which only 87 are fit for use, and many of these are in country districts, far from the crowded parts of the city. Vacant sittings, 14,154, chiefly in the grammar grades (which contain less than 25 per cent. of the total number of pupils); many of them represent desks crowded into the rooms. The report states that a redistribution of scholars will place the 156 half-time classes on full time.

The plan proposed by the report will be foreseen, namely, a careful redistribution of scholars, irrespective of ward lines, and this, it is claimed, can be brought about without a dollar of expense. To

further the plan, the necessity is once more noted of disposing of unused school properties in the business portions of the city. According to law, the proceeds of such sales revert to the city treasury. Yet they might be made the basis for new appropriations by Councils. Provision for half-time pupils and those out of school is made to appear quite easy. The truth cannot be known till we ascertain the number of the latter and compare it with the number of vacant usable sittings. Whether or not additional accommodations are needed will soon be known. In either event, the plan for redistribution is undoubtedly the most feasible and most reasonable solution of the question of accommodation. Let us utilize the facilities at hand and congratulate ourselves that the plan proposed is a step towards breaking down ward lines. If, on the other hand, it be found that increased accommodations are needed, let us spare no pains to obtain the necessary appropriations. On January 6, 1898, appropriations for the year were made as follows: \$150,000 for three new school-houses, \$35,000 for rent and furniture of new buildings, \$50,000 for school lots.

We have spoken of accommodations, for the reason that lack of accommodation is the most apparent of the difficulties. The attendance officers have begun work in the central or business portions of the city, and in those districts where there are known to be vacant rooms and sittings.

The next question is, what is to be done with the children? The majority will enter regular classes. We shall, however, soon find ourselves in the situation described by the Superintendent at Newburgh, N. Y., who says:—

“For pupils above the age of 14, who, from their own fault, the neglect of parents or adverse circumstances, have not attended school, there is no proper place in a

graded school. Their pride revolts at being classed with pupils beneath them in size and years. Manual training, the use of hand tools for boys, and sewing for girls, should be important features. Music should have its proper place; military drill would prove a desirable adjunct, mainly for its disciplinary powers."

The Superintendent at Ithaca, N. Y., making a plea for ungraded rooms, says:—

"Our ungraded room, located outside of the school, has been a great help during the past year. It has relieved teachers from the annoyance and the care of unruly pupils, made it possible to give those that need it personal attention, prevented much contamination of other children, and saved the necessity of sending any away to a truant school, or of making expensive provision for a regular truant school here. It has also made the discipline throughout the city much easier to maintain. The ungraded room is well fitted up, and we spare no pains to avoid causing the children to feel that they are less favored than others, and to make them love the school."

Mr. Locke, of the New York City Truant School, urges the importance of the ungraded room, and Mr. Chapin, before quoted, makes a strong plea for the specially skilful, individual teaching, that cannot be supplied in a graded room. Providence, R. I., has practically this system of special ungraded class rooms in its so-called disciplinary schools. The Cleveland Superintendent speaks of their two unclassified rooms as the "necessary accompaniment of a compulsory system." In short, while all authorities claim that the parental school is indispensable to a thoroughly efficient system of compulsion, the needs of the average delinquent may for a time be met by an *ungraded*

class room. Throughout New York State, as in Massachusetts, the ungraded room is found to be a feasible and temporary substitute for the parental school. Commitment to a parental school may be found necessary in some cases, but only for wilful truants, and to these such schools should be confined. A conciliatory policy and the fact of an inadequate school provision would seem to point to the ungraded rooms rather than to a parental school as most needed in Philadelphia.—at least for the present.

If Philadelphia is to secure ungraded rooms and expert teachers for them, there will certainly be need for an increase in the appropriations made by Councils for the enforcement of the Compulsory Law. \$5,000 were appropriated for the Fall of 1897, only \$9,000 for 1898; yet \$15,000 is the lowest estimate of the costs for the year, for a proper enforcement of the Act. The Public Education Association is preparing an appeal to Councils. Possibly it was due to a misunderstanding that a reduction was made in the amount asked for by the Board of Education Committee. The understanding appears to have been that the appropriations were for the salaries of attendance officers only. It will be apparent to all, that teachers of special fitness will have to be carefully selected, and well paid.

It may be that the number of attendance officers is too large. The Committees cannot but feel that as soon as the system is thoroughly organized, a smaller number with better pay might be an improvement on the present plan. The number of officers to be continued in office lies in the discretion of the Board of Education. In New York State there are about 2,000 such officers, of whom only eight or ten are women. New York City employs twenty officers,

of whom three are women. All receive \$1,200 per annum, and are appointed after a Civil Service examination. The Brooklyn salary is \$1,000, and there are ten officers. Chicago pays \$750, to fifteen officers, fourteen of whom are women. Boston has nineteen attendance officers, all men. It would also seem advisable to require that officers in some districts speak one or more foreign languages.

We may learn from New York and Boston, the advantage of a well organized truancy department. In New York City, it may be remembered, the Board of attendance officers is entrusted with the first hearing of cases of persistent truancy, and may be assisted in the performance of their duties by a detail of two of the municipal police, with or without uniform. There is also a Superintendent of the Truancy Department. Similarly, in Boston, the staff is well organized. In Massachusetts and New York, an attendance officer may, on suspicion of truancy, arrest, without warrant, any child of legal school age found at large. London has a separate truancy department. The reasonableness of organization will be felt when we remember that unless the work of record, report, and investigation of cases of non-attendance be delegated to some competent and responsible body, it must fall upon the School Boards and the already over-worked teacher, especially throughout the State.

Finally, care should be used in the acceptance of excuses for absence, in the decision of what constitutes a valid excuse. The committees feel that the experience of other States and countries should be regarded on this point, and that, as in Massachusetts and abroad, lack of proper clothing should not be deemed a valid excuse. The suggestion was thrown out that co-operation with

the Charity Organization Society should meet the case. Could the Society be strengthened in its aims by additional workers, many difficulties might disappear. Since the original reading of this report, co-operation has been offered by the Charity Organization Society, the Society to Protect Children from Cruelty, the Home Missionary Society, the First Baptist Church, and the Protestant Episcopal City Mission. The Superintendent refers cases of destitution and, through the attendance officers, keeps account of the disposition made of each case. It need hardly be pointed out that the Superintendent's right, as the responsible head, to approve or disapprove the disposition made, should receive the support of the public. We would suggest that the co-operation of the Visiting Nurse Society be sought in cases of illness, and, similarly, that of all other charitable or philanthropic organizations, each in its proper function. The aid of the day nurseries would prevent the retention of pupils at home to take charge of the younger children of the family.

We have quoted somewhat fully from the experience of other States because it is our conviction that we should learn by their experience, and we have endeavored to make our suggestions as practical as possible. The committees feel that the chief stress of the report should be laid upon those things for which we may agitate and to which we should lend our support. The points that, on the whole, seem most important for Philadelphia, most feasible, and least expensive,—and on these emphasis should be placed,—are the following:—

First, an accurate and intelligent census of children out of school. Second, redistribution of scholars, irrespective of ward lines. Third, increased accommodations. Fourth, ungraded class rooms with expert teachers.

Fifth, increased appropriations for enforcement; (a) for teachers of special fitness, (b) for ungraded class rooms. Sixth, as soon as the system is thoroughly organized, higher salaries to the attendance officers and increased responsibilities. Seventh, fuller knowledge of the law, which should be posted in every school-house and otherwise made known. Eighth, a well-organized truancy department.

We have tried to point out the important features of an efficient system of compulsory education; but satisfactory records of attendance, with results that make for character and for good citizenship, will not be obtained, unless we recognize that a thorough improvement all along the line is quite as necessary to secure universal education, as the enforcement of attendance. In Rhode Island, one year of compulsory attendance brought the average daily attendance from 49 per cent. to 78 per cent., but the Secretary of their Board of Education attributes it mainly to "better teaching, increased attractiveness of schools, and wider interest in education." In Brooklyn, truancy is caused largely by what is known as "freezing out," a process by which the teacher gradually makes the troublesome boy feel that he is not wanted in her school. Dingy and unattractive school rooms, teaching and teachers that are such only in name, are some of the causes that make compulsion necessary. The most efficacious and least expensive remedies for truancy and non-attendance are preventive measures. They have been tried and found successful. Let us endeavor to realize the ideal of the Superintendent of Schools of Jamestown, N. Y., and "make education so popular and so much a matter of necessity, that none but the vagrant and criminal classes will think of depriving their children of the least of its opportunities."

# Appendix A.

## AN ACT

To provide for the attendance of children in the schools of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Approved the 12th day of July, 1897.

Section 1. That every parent, guardian or other person in this Commonwealth, having control or charge of a child or children between the ages of eight and sixteen years, shall be required to send such child or children to a day school in which the common English branches are taught, and such child or children shall attend such school continuously during at least seventy per centum of the time in which schools in their respective districts shall be in session, which period of compulsory attendance shall begin at the beginning of the school term, or at a time fixed by the board of directors or controllers when they meet to organize, unless such child or children shall be excused from such attendance by the board of the school district in which the parent, guardian or other person resides, upon the presentation to said board of satisfactory evidence showing such child or children are prevented from attendance upon school, or application to study, by mental, physical or other urgent reasons: Provided, That this act shall

Duties of  
parents.

Age of children  
who must at-  
tend school.

Time children  
shall attend  
school.

Unless excused..

Reasons for  
excuse.

Proviso.



not apply to any child between the ages of thirteen and sixteen years that is regularly engaged in any useful employment or service:

Proviso. Provided, That in case there be no public school in session within two miles of the nearest traveled road of any person within the school district, he or she shall not be liable to

Proviso. the provisions of this act: Provided, That this act shall not apply to any child that has been or is being otherwise instructed in English in the common branches of learning for a like

Proviso. period of time: And provided further, That any principal of any private school or educational institution, or any teacher giving private instruction, shall report as provided in Section Five (5) of this act, and shall furnish monthly to each child under his care, or to its

Certificate to be issued.

parents or guardian, a certificate duly signed that such child has been or is being instructed as provided by this act, which certificate shall be sufficient and satisfactory evidence thereof.

Penalty for violation of act by person in parental relation.

Sec. 2. For every neglect of duty imposed by the first section of this act, the principal teacher or person in parental relation offending shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall, upon conviction thereof before a justice of the peace or alderman, forfeit a fine not exceeding two dollars on the first conviction, and a fine not exceeding five dollars for each

Proviso. subsequent conviction: Provided, Upon conviction the defendant or defendants may appeal to the court of quarter sessions of the peace of the proper county within thirty days, upon entering into recognizance with one

surety for the amount of fines and costs: Provided, however, That before such penalty shall be incurred, the parent, guardian or other person liable therefor, shall be notified in writing by the secretary of the school board, or by the attendance officer, if there be one, of such liability, and shall have opportunity by compliance with the requirements of this act then and thereafter to avoid the imposition of such penalty. The fines provided for by this act shall, when collected, be paid over by the officers collecting the same into the county treasury of the respective counties, for the use of the proper school treasurer of the city or school district in which such person convicted resides, to be applied and accounted for by such treasurers in the same way as other moneys raised for school purposes; such fines shall be collected by a process of law similar to the collection of other fines.

Proviso that notice shall be given parent.

Fines shall be paid over to county treasury.

For use of school district.

How applied.

Collection of fines.

Sec. 3. Boards of school directors or school controllers shall in cities, and may in boroughs and townships, employ one or more persons to be known as attendance officers, who shall have full power and whose duty it shall be to look after, arrest, apprehend and place in such schools as the person in parental relation or the board of directors or controllers may designate, truants and others who fail to attend school in accordance with the provisions of this act. The persons appointed such attendance officers shall be entitled to such compensation, not exceeding two dollars a day, as shall be fixed by the boards appoint-

Attendance officers, employment of.

Duty of.

Compensation of.

How paid.	ing them, and such compensation may be paid out of the school fund; boards of directors or controllers of any school district, or of two or more districts jointly, may establish special schools for children who are habitual truants, or who are insubordinate or disorderly during their attendance upon instruction in the public schools, and may provide for the proper care, maintenance and instruction of such children in such schools. Before such penalty shall be incurred by such child, the parent, guardian or other person in parental relation to the child shall be notified in writing by the secretary of the school board, or by the attendance officer if there be one, and shall have an opportunity to be heard; such person in parental relation may elect to have such child cared for and maintained at his own expense in a private school, orphans' home or similar institution where the common English branches are taught. If such person in parental relation to such child shall not elect to care for and maintain such child in such private school, nor consent to his care, maintenance and instruction in the public special school, then such conduct of the child shall be deemed disorderly conduct, and the child may be proceeded against as a disorderly person; and upon conviction thereof shall be sentenced to such special school for a term not exceeding the remainder of the school term in his district, subject to parole for good conduct by the authorities of such special school after four weeks' attendance.
Boards may establish special schools for habitual truants.	
May provide for their maintenance, etc., in such schools.	
Before penalty is enforced parents to be notified in writing.	
Child may be cared for in private school, etc.	
If parent refuse, then child may be proceeded against.	
Conviction and sentence.	

Such special schools shall be conducted with a view to the improvement and to the restoration, as soon as practicable, of such child to the school or institution elsewhere which he may be lawfully required to attend. The board of directors or controllers of any city or school district not having such special school, may contract with any other city or district having such school for the care, maintenance and instruction therein of children whom such boards of directors or controllers might require to attend such school if there were one in their own city or district.

Special schools and their purpose.

Board may contract with other district for care and maintenance

Sec. 4. It shall be the duty of the assessors of voters of every district, when not notified and directed to the contrary by the school board, at the spring registration of voters, or as soon as possible thereafter, to make, in a substantial book provided by the county commissioners for that purpose, a careful and correct list of all children between the ages of six and twenty-one years within his district, giving the full name, date of birth, age, sex, nationality, residence, sub-school district, name and address of parent or person in parental relation, and name and address of the employer of any child under sixteen years of age that is engaged in any regular employment or service; which enumeration, after approval by the secretary of the said school district, shall be returned by the said assessor to the county commissioners of the county in which the enumeration is made, whose duty it will be to forward a certified copy of the same

Assessors shall make list of children.

What shall be set out in list.

List shall be returned to county commissioners, who shall certify same to secretary of school district.

to the secretary of the proper school district prior to July 15th of each year, who shall immediately furnish the principal or teacher of each school with a correct list of all children in his or her district who are subject to the provisions of this act, and shall furnish a summary of such statistics to the Superintendent of Public Instruction upon blanks provided by the State. And the said assessors shall be paid, out of the county funds, a per diem compensation for their services, a sum equal to the compensation paid under existing laws for assessors of election, said services not to exceed ten days: Provided, That prior to February 1st of any year, any board of directors or controllers of any school district may authorize such enumeration to be made by the attendance officers at the expense of the school district, and at such times as they may direct: Provided further, That the attendance officers, if there be any, or the secretary of the school board, shall have power to add to this register the names of children within the prescribed ages whose names do not appear thereon.

List shall be  
furnished to  
teacher.

Compensation of  
assessors.

Proviso.

Proviso.

Report of  
teacher.

Sec. 5. It shall be the duty of each teacher in the school district to report at the end of each month to the attendance officer, or the secretary of the board of directors or controllers, the names of all children on the list previously furnished by said secretary who have been absent five days without lawful excuse; when if it shall appear that any parent, guardian or other person having control of any

child or children shall have failed to comply with the provisions of this act, after due notification in writing as provided in Sec. 2, the secretary, or attendance officer if there be one, in the name of the school district, shall proceed against the offending party or parties in accordance with law by complaint before an alderman or justice of the peace: Provided further, That if sufficient cause be shown for the neglect of the requirements of this act, the cost of said proceedings shall be paid out of the district funds upon a proper voucher approved by the board of directors or controllers.

Notice of absence to parent or guardian.

Complaint against person offending.

When district shall pay cost of complaint.

## Appendix B.

### Suggestions for further amendment to the Pennsylvania Compulsory Attendance Act.

- Attendance.** 1. Attendance for entire term, except in case of valid excuse. (Compare experience of Connecticut, New York, and Massachusetts.) Two weeks' attendance on half time or at night school to count as one week at a day school, (N. Y.); and the night schools improved up to the standard of the day schools.
2. In excuses for absence, the phrase "other urgent reasons" to be omitted, so that mental or physical disability alone stand as valid excuse.

- Reports of teachers.** 3. Penalty for neglect to report (Mass); reports to record attendance in detail, by the year, month, day of month and day of week, and number of hours in each day (N. Y.); to be legally open for inspection and copy by attendance officers or other authorized persons, (N. Y.).

4. In cases of removal or transfer, prompt notification by teacher to authorities of new district, (Mass.).

- Attendance officers.** 5. *Requirement* of boroughs and townships, as well as cities, to appoint attendance officers. Also a penalty upon cities, boroughs,

and townships for failure to appoint these officers.

6. A well-organized and responsible truancy department (London, Boston and New York).

7. Attendance officers to have power to arrest truants found in streets and to return them to school, or, in case of incorrigible truancy, to a magistrate for commitment to parental school; officers to report action at once at child's regular place of attendance, (Mass. and N. Y.). Officers to have police aid when necessary (N. Y.).

8. Provision for removal of incompetent attendance officers (N. Y.).

9. Assessors' or attendance officers' census of children to state attendance upon public, private or parochial school, or cause of absence, viz., parental neglect, destitution, legal or illegal employment, instruction at home, truancy, or mental or physical disability, (N. Y.). Census.

10. State supervision and enforcement upon towns, by withdrawal of a part of appropriations in case of neglect (Mass. and N. Y.); by appointment of one or more State attendance officers, to act in all cases of doubtful jurisdiction, (Mass.); by establishment and maintenance of one or more State parental schools, for children outside of large cities, (N. Y. and Mass.); by designation of State Superintendent as ultimate destination of reports of teachers, (N. Y.). State supervision



*Note.*—In Philadelphia, the able organization of the compulsory attendance system by Superintendent Brooks, is putting nearly all of the above suggestions into effect. The law does not, however, go into minute details, nor specifically *require* this thoroughness. In the smaller towns of the State, and in cities less fortunate in their choice of an organizer, the failure of the law to prescribe for details may render it practically inoperative.

## Bibliography.

---

Reports of U. S. Commissioner of Education, for 1888-1889, I. pages 470-531; 1894-1895, I. pages 1118-1123.

United States Bureau of Education Circular, December, 1871, pages 5-17. Van Bokkelen.

Blewitt, in "Education," Vol. IV, page 23.

Dudley Campbell, page 45; Murray, London, 1870.

J. B. Try, Public Schools and Compulsory Education, page 30; New York, 1887.

J. D. Philbrick, Report on Truancy and Compulsory Education, page 70; in school report for Boston, 1862.

G. W. Ross, Report on Compulsory Education in Canada, Great Britain, Germany, and the United States; Warwick, Toronto, 1891.

Addresses before Civic Club, March 21, 1896.

O. H. Cooper, Texas, Compulsory Laws and their Enforcement, 1890. Papers on School Issues of the Day, No. XII: Syracuse, 1890.

J. W. Perrin, History of Compulsory Education in New England; 1896.

B. G. Northrop, Connecticut, 1872, Obligatory Education.

James Grant, in "History of Borough Schools of Scotland," pages 307-316; 1876.

W. H. Maxwell, Annual Report of Brooklyn Superintendent, for 1896; pages 69-76.

Boston School Documents, 4, 1895; 5, 1897, and 15, 1897. Annual Report of Committee on Truant Officers.

